

# INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT

SURGEONS' HALL, EDINBURGH,

AT THE

OPENING OF THE MEDICAL SESSION, OCTOBER 1866.

BY

PATRICK HERON WATSON, M.D., F.R.S.E., F.R.C.S.E.,

LECTURER ON SURGERY,

SURGEON TO EDINBURGH ROYAL INFIRMARY AND CHALMERS' HOSPITAL.

EDINBURGH: PRINTED BY OLIVER AND BOYD.

REPRINTED FROM THE EDINBURGH MEDICAL JOURNAL FOR MARCH 1867.

## INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

---

GENTLEMEN,—I wish the duty which falls to my lot to-day had been confided to other hands, and that to some one of your senior teachers had been intrusted the words of welcome, of advice, of warning, and of encouragement which my remarks are intended to convey to you at this the commencement of another winter's campaign.

It is no want of will on my part which makes me pause on this the very threshold; but it seems to me, as the occasion is one well fitted to arrest the attention, to mould the character, to develop healthy and high-spirited aspirations, it had been better that a wiser head and some more eloquent tongue had been selected for the performance of so momentous a duty.

But if the advantages which grey hairs confer are not mine, if the time since I sat as a student on the benches which you now occupy, and listened to more than one Address introductory to the business of a Winter Session is but a very little time ago, such a circumstance should only bring me nearer to you in my knowledge of your ways and your wants, should only make me more at one with you in heart and feeling, and should surely serve to establish between us such a sympathy of sentiment as may help me to speak more heartily to you, and enable you to listen more patiently to me, as little else than one of yourselves.

First of all, then, my duty is to welcome you all, both juniors and seniors, to your winter's studies; and most sincerely, in the name of my colleagues and myself, do I wish you God-speed in entering upon the duties of this session.

Those of you who have met with us here before will believe, I feel sure, that our welcome is no empty form of words. As our highest ambition is to prove successful teachers in our various departments, so it is our fondest wish that each and all of you may work well, and gain not only class honours and prizes—to these



you cannot all attain—but that highest and best reward of all good work, a conscious sense of having done your duty.

“Tis not in mortals to command success;  
But you may do more: you may deserve it.”

To those of you who come among us for the first time, and scarcely yet know what lies before you, I should wish at once to dissipate any feeling of strangeness which may steal over you—any sense of home sickness which may perchance well nigh make your hearts fail you,—by not only welcoming you among us, and sincerely congratulating you upon the choice you have made of a profession, but also by assuring you, that whatever doubts or fears or difficulties may assail you, or seem to impede your progress at the very commencement, we, your teachers, are most anxious to make your acquaintance, and to direct and advise you, if you wish it; so, pray, be well assured if you do not avail yourselves of our proffered assistance whenever you may need it, the fault lies with you in not confiding in the sincerity of our friendship for you. We have no wish to hold off from you, or to make it seem that there is any greater barrier fixed between us than the inevitable one which a few short years places between men and youths, between teachers and pupils. If difficulties occur in your studies, in the arrangement of your course, in any of the thousand-and-one things which start up as obstacles in the way of smooth onward progress, you may be well assured, if your teachers can be of use to you, that your position as a student is the best introduction to them, and that it will always make you welcome to their best consideration.

While to all of you, willing, working students, we most heartily hold out the hand of friendly welcome, I am sure I only speak the wishes of my colleagues when I say to all mere idlers, or worse than idlers, that we do not wish them amongst us. If they come here without contrition for the past waste and loss of time, without any desire to be something better than before—without the determination to acquire good working habits, and to make up for what in time, in means, in opportunities, they have already squandered, their presence here will not only be prejudicial to themselves, not only a practical deception to their friends, but, worse still, a bad example to their fellow-students, and, as I very well know, calculated to distract many who might otherwise have been diligent in their studies, correct in their behaviour, and (were it not for the habits they have contracted from the example and precept of others) ornaments to a profession, in which any moral deficiency is sure, in the long-run, to meet with its just punishment.

This note of warning reminds me that the present may be no inopportune occasion to admonish the young and inexperienced who come among us for the first time, that they should be careful and reticent in the formation of acquaintances, and, still more so, of friendships.

What I mean when I recommend care and due circumspection in the choice of intimates and friends is, that you should study to form the intimacy and friendship of those, and those only, whose sentiments and characters are pure and unblemished, whose walk and conversation are devoid of offence, whose advice and counsel you can cherish, upon whom personally you can depend, who will encourage in you only what is good and praiseworthy, and who will not hesitate to set their faces against all that is wrong in thought, word, or deed.

Such men there are in every year of student life—perhaps they are not to be found amongst those who appear at first sight the most attractive of your fellow-students. To some their very virtue may seem repulsive, their out-spoken reproof of what is wicked may perhaps seem rude, their chaste conversation may seem prudish; yet such men are deserving of being marked, and their example is worthy of studious imitation and diligent following. These men are safe, sure friends. They “stand like solitary towers in the city of God, and secret passages running deep beneath external nature, they give their thoughts intercourse with higher intelligencies, which strengthens and consoles them, and of which the labourers on the surface do not even dream.”<sup>1</sup>

It is a strange perversity of our nature to see in those persons and things verging upon the brink of what is sinful something attractive, for vice has oftentimes a “goodly outside;” and while

“Vice is a monster of so frightful mien  
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen:  
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,  
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.”

It is therefore all the more essential that those who would live a godly, sober, and righteous life, should lay their account with having to face the multitude of admiring followers who crowd the train of vicious men. They should set before them as their motto the aphorism of Hippocrates, well-known in classic verse—

“*Principiis obsta, sero medicina paratur  
Cum mala per longas invaluere moras.*”

Let them learn to turn away their sight and eyes from viewing vanity, even now, to-day, when they may be said to embark upon an untried course. Let them recollect—

“Lives of great men all remind us  
We can make our lives sublime,  
And, departing, leave behind us  
Footprints on the sands of time:  
Footprints, that perhaps another  
Sailing o’er life’s solemn main,  
A forlorn and shipwreck’d brother,  
Seeing, shall take heart again.”

<sup>1</sup> Longfellow.



I cannot tell what has been the motive which has led to your choosing Medicine as your subject of present study, and the medical art as the profession to which you virtually declare it is your intention to devote your lives; but of this I am confident, that your friends, parents, or guardians, with whose sanction you have come here, and who are, I doubt not, this day full of proud hopes, as well as anxious fears and fond prayers, that you may be kept from evil, have sent you to this school in the confident trust, that in acquiring a knowledge of your profession you will indulge neither idleness nor debauch, but learn to bear yourselves as men loving good, and eschewing what is bad.

This period of your life, this the outset of your professional career, is to you fraught with a large venture. You are sent forth from the parental home, where all the warm affection of loving hearts has cared for your comforts, has shielded you from the cold chilling atmosphere of this selfish, calculating world, has fettered you in the silken bonds of home discipline, whereby self-restraint in the avoidance of evil has scarcely ever needed your serious contemplation. And is all this rich argosy of hope, embarked in strong reliance on your honesty and trustworthiness, to run the risk of wreck and everlasting ruin? is it to go down, perchance for ever, among the darkness of deep waters without one word of solemn warning, without a beacon-light to guide you, without a helping hand held out to assist and direct you?

Shall we, year after year, have the painful experience of youthful depravity, which comes to the knowledge of each one of us, your teachers,—shall we see bright hopes overcast, shall we see the highest expectations dashed to the ground, shall we see young men led away into every manner of vice, and say no word of warning to those who come here to be under our training, and who at the commencement have ventured on the slippery path of ruin, thinking no evil, and fearing no fall?

No doubt, strictly speaking, your teachers are not responsible for anything in your moral conduct or habits. If you attend your lectures regularly, if your presence in the class-room is marked by punctuality and attention, and your visits to the hospital by diligence and interest, we have no more power to make you learn what we teach you, than to compel you to conduct yourselves with propriety when you leave these halls. Ours is no school with collegiate residence, and discipline enforced by tutorial supervision. When you come among us you are presumed to be already men, knowing how to conduct yourselves, and how to study for yourselves.

But, as a painful experience has taught me, in this as in other matters, that things are not always as they should be, I have ventured to raise a warning voice at the commencement of another year of study, in the hope that it may be the means of opening the eyes of some of those who come amongst us for the first time to the fact,



that in friendships carelessly formed, in habits thoughtlessly contracted, they may enter into a snare which lands them in the loss of all which they and their friends had ventured to calculate upon.

Another risk to be avoided is that of idling away time in fruitless efforts at study. A caution on this subject may seem hardly necessary to those who have passed their preliminary examination, and who thus, it may be supposed, have earned the character of students already. I have no doubt some of you are *students indeed*; and those of you who have made a good appearance in the preliminary examination, will generally be found carrying the same aptitude for study into your professional course. And it is for the purpose of insuring, as far as possible, such capacity of mind, and such development of the faculties as study is fitted to produce, that preliminary examinations are no longer conducted in the perfunctory manner once in vogue.

I daresay the stringent regulations now in force in regard to the preliminary examinations, and the greatly increased attention paid to the several departments included therein, may appear to students a most unnecessary exercise of authority upon the part of the different licensing bodies.

I know the licensing boards have been blamed by some for the imposition of an extended preliminary test, as a measure framed on very purpose to exclude all but a certain class from the portals of the profession. I know that some have regarded it as a measure which binds grievous burdens upon the shoulders of the present generation, which they themselves would not so much as touch with one of their fingers. But, however much force such statements may have in some special examples, in which cases of hardship have been adduced as originating in these regulations, I am confident the authorities, with whom lies the decision of such matters, have been actuated by no base, no mean, no class considerations, by no desire to exclude one rather than another from the practice of the profession, by no wish to diminish the number of worthy practitioners. Their aim has been to secure for the public, in their legislation for the student of medicine, who is some day to become a practitioner, such competent knowledge and information as shall fit him for commencing the study of medicine, well equipped for the course which lies before him.

This end is obtained in part by the varied nature of the subjects of ordinary English education embraced in the preliminary course, partly by the amount of classical and mathematical knowledge which must be professed.

A sound English education acquired before the commencement of your professional career relieves you of the necessity of abstracting time from your medical studies to gain what you must some day possess if you are to occupy the position of gentlemen in society. You may imagine that I am exaggerating when I speak of ignorance among young medical men of their own language, and



of arithmetic. I am sorry, however, to tell you that the want of such ordinary schoolboy training is grievously complained of as characterizing many of the *candidates* who annually come to the Army Medical School. An intimate friend of my own, one of the professors in that school, tells me that, in addition to his own professional subjects of instruction, he has positively to teach the candidates vulgar fractions, the rule of three, and the working of decimals. Such things should not be; but while each licensing board must employ every means in its power to check the admission of young men to the study of the profession who are thus imperfectly educated, the blame of such ignorance should lie, not with the licensing board, but with the schools from which young men in this country are permitted to pass, while they have failed to learn what they were sent there to be taught.

In demanding a due acquaintance with classical literature and mathematics, the intention is to set you upon a mental elevation from which, at a glance, you may be enabled to obtain a wide reaching prospect of the field of science, mental and physical, in which, before the conclusion of your student life, you must plough, sow, and reap, the rich harvest you are designed to gather into your mental barns.

All that knowledge you have to acquire in preliminary study, to fit you for examination, will never make you, in the true sense of the word, learned men,—will never gain for you a position among your fellows as classical students, as proficients in literature, or as mathematicians.

To gain such positions in the world of classics or of letters, you must have trenched the soil far more deeply than is required by any preliminary test at present imposed in this or any other school. Your education, to meet the requirements of the boards, will, I think, *fortunately*, never be of such a kind as to enable you, with even a semblance of justice, to plume yourself on the knowledge of what is equally possessed by those with whom you will come in contact in after life; or, in other words, “to regard your education as valuable, because it enables you to look down upon the man who has it not.”

But if your literary studies do not afford you a claim to be considered as learned men, it is not, therefore, a matter of indifference what amount of proficiency you have attained in your preliminary studies, or what amount of attention you have bestowed upon them.

If the mind has been properly engaged in these studies, then undoubtedly you come to the study of the science and art of medicine with the fruits of that preliminary discipline ready to your use. You commence, in other words, the study of medicine with the most important of all acquirements in ready exercise,—I mean the power to educate or teach yourselves. If you have not as yet gained that, then all your preliminary studies have been indeed in vain. If the various faculties of your mind and inward



consciousness have not been exercised and duly developed thereby, then you have missed the great aim for which you went to school. Much of the information you there attained is probably for its own sake worthless ; it certainly is, if we except the knowledge of the construction of your own language, an acquaintance with the meaning and derivation of the terms employed in medicine, and the art of spelling, writing, and ciphering. At all events, the other subjects of school-training leave a very transient impression behind.

But the grand aim of the years and money spent in gaining what is called a competent knowledge of the dead languages and of mathematics is to develop those faculties which must be rendered robust, and possessed in lively exercise if further attainments are to be made, whether in the study of medicine or of any of those other professions which imply head-work.

You are probably aware that a great philosopher, of whom Scotland and its capital must ever be proud, speaks slightly of the education of medical men, and, alluding more especially to the graduates in medicine of the Scottish Universities, stigmatizes them as *Doctores indocti*. He certainly intended the phrase to be a taunt at the limited amount of preliminary education required in his day to obtain a medical diploma ; but I really see no good reason for smarting under the lash ; the statement is to all intents a true one. To be a learned man, a lifetime must be expended in the acquirement of that learning ; but after all this has been gained, wherein would the student or practitioner be bettered, or humanity relieved ? The time expended in becoming a man of recondite learning has been lost, so far as that knowledge which is profitable to the sick and hurt is concerned.

A happy mean has therefore been sought somewhere between the waste of time upon subjects preliminary to medicine, and a too early introduction to that study itself. Too much of the former renders the man little else than a mere student of books, a book-worm, or a visionary ; the latter produces a creature but one remove from the village charlatan. The one will be so profoundly speculative as to lose time, his patient's confidence, or even his life in metaphysical fancies ; the other will be so grossly material, and abruptly practical, as to be incapable of an idea beyond himself and his own actions.

I am convinced that the great difficulty which obstructs many students at the outset of their career, consists in ignorance of *how to study*. By study, I do not mean to dream over a book, or to spend hour after hour in the fruitless occupation of reading so many pages. It does not consist in accustoming yourself to late hours and strong tea,—sitting,

“ Till on the drowsy page the lights grow dim,  
And doubtful slumber half supplies the theme.”



To study implies not only to read, but to think as well ; and to think in such wise that you may learn the very essence of what you read. It demands not merely the attention of the eyes, but of the whole faculties of the understanding quickened into lively exercise.

If a lad has been taught to study in real earnest when at school, he should be able to teach himself any new language, ancient or modern, without further extraneous aid than a grammar or a dictionary. If he finds himself incapable of this, I have very grave doubts of his capacity to teach himself anything in medical art or science, or to study a work on natural or physical science, so as to make the knowledge serviceable to him.

I do not deny that some men who have failed in boyhood and youth to acquire the powers of discrimination, continuous attention, and critical reasoning, from the study of the dead languages, may prove good sound practitioners in after years. They have perhaps failed to apprehend the use and advantage of these school occupations, and only with the dexterous aid of tutors and grinders have drudged up to the threshold of the medical schools. But if they wish to succeed now and in the future, they must somehow discover the use of those faculties which have so long lain dormant ; they must, when at length placed face to face with facts and theories which possess an important bearing upon their future professional course, make up for lost time, and discover in study a pleasurable exercise of their mental powers which they had previously failed to awaken. They must recollect, however, that they will find themselves embarrassed with the double weight of learning to learn, and of storing up what they now for the first time begin to learn in good earnest. To such we would say,

“ Fall to them, as you find your stomach serves you !  
No profit grows where is no pleasure ta'en ;  
In brief, sir, study what you must affect.”

Remember this, that “ Every man has two educations—that which is given to him ; and the other, that which he gives to himself ; of the two kinds the latter is by far the most valuable. Indeed, all that is most worthy in a man, he must work out and conquer for himself. It is this that constitutes our real and best nourishment. What we are merely *taught* seldom nourishes the mind like that which we teach ourselves.”—“ And as a man under God is in all circumstances the master of his own fortune, so he is the maker of his own mind. The Creator has so constituted the human intellect, that it can only grow by its own action : it will certainly and necessarily grow. Every man must therefore educate himself. His books and teacher are but helps ; the work is his.”

It may seem in the retrospect a long period of apprenticeship through which you have been obliged to pass,—these eight or ten



years which you have spent at school in acquiring the art of teaching yourselves,—but if the result has really been attained, it has been time well spent. To most of you, I daresay, your schooldays have been a period of bondage, in which the force of necessity rather than any pleasure or interest in your study has compelled you to work steadily.

I can scarcely suppose you have felt practically persuaded of the force of the homely maxim, which I doubt not has been rendered sufficiently familiar from frequent repetition—"Duty first—Pleasure afterwards."

In schooldays it is rare to find the boy who prefers his books and his study to a holiday, or who can concentrate his attention on his Homer or his Virgil to the entire oblivion of a game of cricket, a fishing expedition, or a paper hunt. Now, however, that you have entered upon your life's study, you are supposed to have put away childish things, and to have disciplined your mind in such fashion, that present duty and duty alone shall take the pre-eminence. If such a state of mind has not yet been reached, the sooner with an *Excelsior* spirit you attain to it the better; for the profession upon which you are about to enter certainly entails a greater—a far greater, amount of self-denial and sacrifice than any other.

If you ever expect any one to intrust his own body, and that of those nearest and dearest to him, to your care, it can only be because you are steadily devoted to what you profess to have made your life's avocation, and because you manifest, by something else than words, your intention of allowing no pleasure or self-gratification to interfere with your devotion to work.

I can believe that such a sudden awakening to the duties and work of life is sometimes a very unpleasant sensation. I daresay we have all met with cases where men have lived the greater part of their lives failing to apprehend that they have been sent into this world for any other purpose than mere sensuous enjoyment, "*Natos consumere frages*;" but who, suddenly deprived of money and friends, have had the painful fact, that they must work if they would live brought home to them in a single day.

But, if the realization of the necessity of work is oftentimes unpleasant, be comforted by this consideration, that the duty itself, honestly undertaken, will, in the very act of its performance, become a source of real pleasure, and may carry in its train honour and renown.

"Not once or twice in our rough island-story,  
The path of duty was the way to glory:  
He that walks it, only thirsting  
For the right, and learns to deaden  
Love of self, before his journey closes,  
He shall find the stubborn thistle bursting  
Into glossy purples, which out-redden  
All voluptuous garden roses.

Not once or twice in our fair island-story,  
 The path of duty was the way to glory :  
 He, that ever following her commands,  
 On with toil of heart and knees and hands,  
 Thro' the long gorge to the far light has won  
 His path upward, and prevail'd,  
 Shall find the toppling crags of duty scaled  
 Are close upon the shining table-lands  
 To which our God himself is moon and sun."

By steady work you will find the sting removed from the primeval curse of labour, and, step by step as you advance, the sweets of active constant employment, mental, physical, or both practically realized. There is no man so happy as the busy man, and none so likely to take offence, to keep up a quarrel, or suffer from a painful self-consciousness, as the idle, or comparatively idle, one. You will never meet with a hypochondriac, except among the ranks of those who have more time on their hands than they can occupy with legitimate work. The *otium cum dignitate* for which some men sigh is usually a second childhood,—a wretched, peevish, puling, period of octogenarian imbecility.

Pray set yourselves to gain good working habits, get into harness as soon as you can, put the collar on, and throw your physical and mental strength in steady continuous strain into your work.

You can scarcely imagine, till you have practically tested it, the power which steady working habits will give you. A very moderate degree of ability will, with steady exercise, do a far larger day's work—month's work—life's work—than the spasmodic efforts of great genius. The former is the slow steady crawl of the tortoise which beat the fleet-footed hare of the fable. Genius and steady working power when concurrent—but are they ever concurrent—must win the race; but when only one talent is given, between genius and working power to make a choice, the latter is the more desirable. But as genius—true genius is a rare gift, the mediocrity of ability bestowed on most men needs all the help which steady conscientious labour can bestow to win the prizes of life.

There is nothing worse than spasmodic effort in your work, unless it be labouring with a strain upon your mental energies which no brain could endure for six months. The latter must speedily eventuate in either a mental break-down, or in forced relaxation from all head-work of any kind. I admit, gladly, that such consequences are rare, overwork being a mistake seldom committed by young men of the present generation. Still examples have occurred, once and again, where richly gifted intellects have given way under the strain of continuous unremitting study; or when physical disease, rapidly pursuing its fatal termination, has quenched for ever the light and pride of some happy home. Scarcely a session passes but we have to mourn the loss from amongst us of some favourite pupil, endeared to us not more by his mental abilities than by his diligence and perseverance in work: but in whose delicately



moulded face, where thoughtful care mingled with the winning grace and loveliness of youth, the too bright eye, the spiritual head, the lips that pressed each other with such high resolve and courage of the heart, the slight figure, firm in its bearing and yet so very weak, we could not fail to recognise that the few short years of the earthly span were in his case fast drawing to a close, and that in his earnest walk he was travelling along that way whence he should not return.

“Take them, O Death! and bear away  
Whatever thou canst call thine own!  
Thine image stamped upon this clay  
Doth give thee that—and that alone!

“Take them, O Grave! and let them lie  
Folded upon thy narrow shelves  
As garments by the soul laid by  
And precious only to ourselves!

“Take them, O great Eternity!  
Our little life is but a gust  
That bends the branches of thy tree,  
And trails its blossoms in the dust.”

“Sic rosa sic violae primâ moriuntur in herbâ  
Candidâ nec toto lilia mense nitent.”

Again, spasmodic—by which I mean irregular—efforts in study are fraught with evil. For by them the attention is distracted, and the continuity of effect so broken as to render the result quite unequal to the time and energy bestowed. Read and study *much*, as much as you can, by all means, but not *many subjects* or *many books* upon the same subject, or at the same time. And when you profess to have engaged your mental powers in the consideration of one topic, do not let it wander vaguely from one book to another, or from the words of your teacher to something else quite irrelevant.

The physical and mental constituents of our being naturally correspond; and as the physical are more easily apprehended than the mental, I shall illustrate the evil effects of irregular efforts, and the satisfactory results of steady efforts in study, by an example from the homely and better known instance of the power of the physical frame.

As students of surgery, you will soon come to know that, in the reduction of dislocations, your extension efforts intended to overcome muscular resistance must be steady, uniform, and maintained, a fact not always sufficiently brought home to the attention of our pupils, as the following anecdote will testify.

A famous London surgeon, chancing to visit his hospital at an unusual hour, found the resident staff of the establishment busied in ineffectual efforts to reduce a dislocated shoulder. There sat the patient, a brawny, broad-shouldered Hercules, who, spite the pain he suffered, was inclined to ridicule the puny efforts of four young



gentlemen, who for twenty minutes had vainly expended all their powers upon him. It was before the days of chloroform; and with all their tugging and hauling there sat the patient unsubdued, and the dislocation unreduced. The surgeon, appealed to, had the patient firmly secured to an iron post in the waiting-room, and directed one of the young gentlemen to lean his dead weight upon the extending apparatus. This arrangement accomplished, the patient ridiculed the idea that in ten minutes the reduction would be effected. He was jocose for the first few minutes. Then he began to fidget. Then, as the sweat rolled in great drops off his whitening face, he anxiously inquired if time was not "up," and before the ten minutes were expended, the dislocated bone returned to its socket under the mere influence of the dead weight wearing out the muscles of the half-fainting man.

The moral of this story is, not to tell you how to reduce dislocations,—with that at present I have nothing to do,—but to indicate the principle upon which you are to set yourself to exhaust the whole circle of the art and science of Medicine. This is to be done by the sheer influence of the dead weight of constant, unvarying application. With this the greatest difficulties will be overcome in a much shorter time, and with less expenditure of power, than by the employment of great but fitful effort.

By this I do not mean to teach you that you are never to employ your reserve energy. There are times when it should be called forth, when every exertion of which you are capable should and must be brought into likely exercise. But to have such power capable of being brought into use, it must not be constantly strained, else when the time comes for its advantageous employment you will find it exhausted through fatigue. No general ever sends his entire force into action, or dashes the whole mass of his battalions against the foe. He keeps what in military language are called his reserves, and success often depends more upon the judgment exercised in keeping them out of sight, and certainly out of action, till the decisive moment arrives, when either a feeble position has to be strengthened, or a routed foe needs to be driven from the field.

Employ your mental forces much in the same way, keep a strong reserve ready and on the alert for any special occasion, but do your daily plodding work with your whole heart certainly, but with such energy alone as is sufficient to overcome the resistance which you find any department of study opposes to your steady effort.

Let the work of each day as it occurs be thoroughly concluded in the course of that day. There is no habit more easily contracted, none more dangerous than delaying till to-morrow the duties of to-day. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. So, pray, do not condense the inevitable labours of two days into one, else the back will soon grow feeble under the burden. Especially, avoid the habit of condensing a whole week's work into the Friday and



Saturday evenings, for such a habit will soon make you no better than the old woman rendered proverbial by commencing her week's work at eleven o'clock on the Saturday night. Take time by the forelock, and rather leave your Friday evenings,—certainly your Saturday's,—as free from work and as disencumbered for social enjoyment as you possibly can. The bow must be unbent for a time, else it will lose its elastic tension; and your easy working capacity will likewise largely depend on the judicious alternation of work and relaxation.

When you do work, let it be serious, good work, engaged in as such, with an undivided attention. When it is relaxation, let it be as heartily enjoyed, and the work for the time as completely forgotten as is possible. No other mode of union is possible with these two unmixable quantities. They are like oil and water. When shaken together they may appear to mingle, but as speedily separate again, affording no composite result,—they are oil and water still. There is a good Spanish proverb,—by mixing two good things you have made a bad *third*. Well, work and pleasure are just as incompatible; so take the work, which is to be your life's labour, first; give it the chiefest place, and let the pleasure rather resemble the oil floating like a film upon the surface. Floating there, let it prove a protection against the chilling frosts of a cold selfish world, let it smooth the stormy billows which will buffet and may overwhelm your little craft. Let the social pleasures and the playtime of your existence be like oil poured upon the troubled waters of an active, a useful, and a busy life.

“ All things have rest, why should we toil alone ?  
 We only toil who are the first of things,  
 And make perpetual moan ;  
 Still from one labour to another thrown ;  
 Nor ever fold our wings,  
 Nor cease from wanderings.”

I have little to say as to the arrangement of your course of study which implies any important differences of opinion from those who have wisely framed the regulations of our sister colleges.

You will bear in mind, however, that the boundary within which the subjects of study are comprised is a limited one. What is included is not all that may be,—shall I say, all that should be,—but simply what is barely necessary. What is circumscribed within the line is nearer the minimum than the maximum of study needed to make you good practitioners. But the regulations of the boards do not restrict you to such cramped limits, and the more you can add to such a course without interfering with the efficient pursuit of what is essential, will certainly be of the very greatest importance to you. It will not eventuate satisfactorily for you to neglect any of the subjects demanded for examination. The licensing boards stringently require a competent knowledge of every department of



study. They leave no margin for a young man to pick and choose for himself, nor do they admit pre-eminent acquaintance with one subject to excuse ignorance of another. You need not hope that a thorough acquaintance with anatomy will prove any extenuation for a perfunctory knowledge of chemistry, nor suppose that your great practical acquaintance with midwifery will excuse your ignorance of surgery or medicine.

Some of the subjects which you must now study may never require your attention after you have entered on professional life. Nevertheless, till your diploma is obtained, make that subject, as well as every other, a special study, cultivating your interest in it, and devoting all your energy to master it, as if on it, and it alone, depended your future success.

This is specially true of the three departments which you are required to study, both theoretically and practically,—I mean medicine, surgery, and midwifery. You may possibly, in after years, from a special proclivity to one or other of these departments, from the circumstances in which you are placed, or some other cause, have your time fully occupied in the practice of only one department of your profession; but such an anticipation, should it exercise any influence whatever upon your present pursuits, should only incline you the more diligently to make yourself master of those with which you are least likely to come in contact in your practice in after years.

No department of the healing art can be satisfactorily, I may say safely, studied or engaged in without at least so much knowledge of every other as you can hope to obtain during your student life. And to obtain even so limited an acquaintance with each and all of them as shall satisfactorily influence you in the practice of any one, must engage all your diligence and every effort of your attention.

I know perfectly the wild dreams of a practice which shall consist of nothing but *pure* surgery or of *pure* medicine, and the arguments some have urged in favour of such subdivision of labour, parodied in the well-known lines,—

“One science only will his genius fit,  
So vast is art, so narrow human wit!”

These are only dreams, from which the man who indulges in them,—unless, indeed, he possess an independent fortune,—will some day awaken to find that, in spurning golden opportunities, he has destroyed the only chance by which the result of his cherished ambition could have been practically realized. Or, after spending the best years of his life in *pure* idleness, after souring his temper, and making himself the laughing-stock of his friends, should his patient endurance be rewarded by the windfall of some coveted appointment, he finds it to be but vanity and vexation of spirit,—the gilded shell, the wasted kernel.



Do not be misled by high sounding titles, but recollect that to obtain, not eminence, but simple mediocrity as a physician or a surgeon, you must have qualified yourself practically for both. If you are ignorant of the one branch of your art, you will inevitably commit errors which will not only make you blush for your own negligence, but may cost your reputation a heavy detraction.

Nice distinctions between physic and surgery are no more understood than is professional etiquette by the world outside, and you will find your names handed from mouth to mouth rather as associated with your mistakes than your successes.

A deformed limb from an overlooked dislocation will scarcely be forgiven in the popular aspect of the question, because you are pleased to call yourself a pure physician, and say, after treating it as a bruise, that the case was not one suited for your proclivities.

A case of so-called gouty rheumatism, and treated with oceans of physic and no end of baths at some fashionable watering place, will scarcely seem to have had fair play when another more surgical gentleman discovers a stricture of the urethra, by treating which the patient immediately recovers.

On the other hand, too *pure* a surgical tendency may inflict an equally irreparable damage upon a patient's frame. It can scarcely be satisfactory to a patient to find, after the surgeon has ineffectually applied the actual cautery to his back or hip, that he speedily recovers under the use of the hot douche and colchicum or iodide of potassium. It is rather too late to discover that a patient is suffering from pulmonary disease of a rapidly fatal kind after you have operated on a painless fistula. It can scarcely be regarded as a triumph of surgery to have operated upon an external aneurism when a much larger and more impending fatal one exists within the chest. Illustrations of the evil of exclusive surgery are neither far to seek nor ill to find. A patient labouring under symptoms of stone in the bladder presents himself to a surgeon. He is sounded, and the existence of a calculus ascertained. But the patient is perhaps in a most unfavourable condition for the performance of any operation for its removal, which is to be discovered only by a careful investigation of the state of his general health. He may have untoward symptoms, which are easily overlooked by the surgeon who fixes his attention on the local disease. His tongue may be furred, his pulse quick, his digestive organs deranged, with loss of appetite, and want of sleep. He may suffer from pain in the loins. His urine may be coagulable, and of low specific gravity, and other symptoms may pass unnoticed which indicate the existence of a renal calculus, or of inflammatory affection of the kidneys. If any operation, be it lithotomy or lithotrity, is performed under such circumstances, it nearly certainly proves fatal; whereas, by previous medical treatment and regulation of diet, his general health might have been so improved that the operation might have been per-



formed with a good prospect of success, or the existence of further disease might have been discovered, contra-indicating the propriety of interfering by surgical operation at all.

Whatever scope there may be in the larger cities of the empire for subdivisions of medicine and surgery, the provincial practitioner must be equally equipped in knowledge and skill for the duties of every branch of practice.

Those of you, too, who enter the public services will find that such nominal distinctions have no place. You must be as ready as a surgeon to spend your day after an action in your regimental shambles as to devote the next to the care of sick sinking under the ravages of some camp epidemic. You will not find your surgical tendencies any excuse for neglecting the inspection of food, privies, or dunghills, or for refusing to attend the women and children of the regiment, while a whole college of physicians cannot absolve you from attending upon punishment parades or the marking of a deserter.

I might, without drawing upon the resources of imagination, narrate instances enough to show the folly of the neglect of any department of the medical art. But I will only mention one such example which occurred a few years since in my own personal experience.

One Saturday in the end of summer, I was called away from town, to a part of the country remote from railways, and from which I could not return till the ensuing Monday. I looked forward when I retired to rest that night, to a quiet undisturbed Sunday in the country, beyond the range of patients and door-bells. Next morning, breakfast was scarcely over when an urgent summons called me to one of the lodges to see the wife of a gardener. You may imagine my consternation when I found this worthy woman in labour, and that my assistance was all the more earnestly requested because in former labours she had twice nearly perished from flooding. Had the case been one of surgical hæmorrhage, I should have felt great satisfaction in being able to render assistance; but to one who had only attended three cases of midwifery, and those at a very early period of my student life, the position was a very embarrassing one. As hour after hour wore on, and the labour seemed making little or no progress, you may imagine the frame of mind in which I moralized upon the worse than fatal folly of my early negligence. Fortunately, however, for me, and for my reputation, all went well with both mother and infant. And I need not dwell upon the satisfaction I enjoyed, when a few weeks later I acknowledged a letter of thanks for my kindness and skill received from the grateful parents by forwarding some articles of baby clothing as a small thank-offering suited to the occasion of the baptism of my name-child.

In pursuing your prescribed course of medical study, there are specially three subjects I should wish to recommend to your most



constant and persevering attention. These are, Anatomy and Hospital and Dispensary practice.

This is saying nothing else than urging you to lay a sound and wide foundation, and to build your superstructure of choicest materials; for Anatomy is the great foundation upon which your whole success must depend; and as the practice of medicine, surgery, and midwifery is your ultimate aim, the sooner you gain a practical acquaintance with them, the more readily will you be able to undertake the charge of patients on your own account.

It is almost needless for me to tell you, Gentlemen, that without a thorough knowledge of anatomy, no one need ever hope to be an accomplished physician or surgeon. The study of anatomy is, however, a very different matter from any of the other educational exercises in which you have hitherto engaged. In it you will probably begin for the first time to educate your eyes to observe accurately, and to employ your hands in delicate manipulation. Books, and plates, and mere memory, will not suffice to instruct you here. What is of most importance to recollect, what will prove most useful to you in any emergency, must be more indelibly impressed upon your consciousness, than by such indirect means for acquiring knowledge.

If you wish really to know your anatomy, you must know the body, and not the mere descriptions of it listened to in the lecture-room, or even as amplified by the study of manuals, however accurate and minute, and however profusely supplied with elegant woodcuts; your anatomy must be acquired in the dissecting-room, and that with diligence and perseverance. Those of you who can afford the time, and who really desire to distinguish yourselves in after-life as physicians or surgeons, must not be content with the amount of practical anatomy enjoined in your curriculum of study. You must spend much of your leisure time in the dissecting-room; you must familiarize yourselves with every tissue and every region in the body; and you must not only dissect the parts, but you must study them in relation to the diseases and injuries to which they are subject, and in connexion with every operation which you may be called on to perform. If your anatomy is anything less than this, you will merely accumulate a mass of facts upon the authority of nothing better than a text-book. The so-called knowledge of anatomy which a youth acquires with no laborious effort, and which he only retains by an exercise of memory, without either digestion or assimilation of the facts themselves, is no true knowledge at all. Such facts in no way nourish his mind, but deposited, as in a store-house, are as utterly raw and undigested as when he swallowed them. He may be full of facts, but it is the fulness of a bottle, which will pour out only what has been poured in. He may be a convenient depository of other men's labours and thoughts, and he may have an admirable capacity for holding and preserving



them, but to call such a man an anatomist is a misuse of terms, and to trust men to his superintendence and care on the strength of such information is a misuse of humanity. Costly apparatus, splendid cabinets, magnificent plates, abundance of material, lectures innumerable, and daily tutorial supervision, will never make you anatomists. These means to an end will only encumber the path, while the end is forgotten or hidden from view by the very embarrassment of present riches. Many a student with but a single text-book, and that perhaps an indifferent one, but who has spent his days in diligent dissection, observation, and comparison, possesses in the long-run far more real knowledge of the subject than others who, with every means at command which money could provide, have rested content with reading from the dissections of others, and looking at plates and woodcuts, instead of working with knife and forceps on their own account.

Do not permit yourself to neglect your anatomy because you find men who have attained great professional success as physicians and surgeons, and either knew little of it at any period of their career, or have forgotten what they once had acquired. Still less credit the assertion that too intimate a knowledge of anatomy embarrasses the operator, and unnerves him for hazardous ventures. The testimony of all our really great surgical authorities is unanimously opposed to such an opinion. "Above all," says John Bell (one of the most shrewd and observant surgeons of his day), "improve yourselves in anatomy. It was by their knowledge of anatomy that Paré (and some others whom he mentions) were distinguished among hundreds of other surgeons in the camp. It was their own intense diligence, and above all their acquaintance with anatomy, the very basis of our science, which made them the first surgeons of the chief cities of England, Holland, and France, the best authors in their own day, and the highest authorities in ours."—"If a surgeon," adds the same author, "ignorant of the facts of the human body, should be called to perform even an established and regular operation, which he has often seen performed, how must he tremble at the thoughts of what he has to do! Faltering and disconcerted! Hesitating at every step! Acting only as he has seen others act, he is interrupted, startled, perplexed, with any new occurrence. He has foreseen nothing, provided for no accident, and every accident alarms him. He moves fearfully and timorously forwards, like a blind man, who walks with an air of confidence on an accustomed road, but when any new object presents itself, or the road is changed, is bewildered and lost."

I would exhort you then, Gentlemen, *now*, when you have the opportunity, to be diligent above all in the prosecution of your practical anatomy. In after years you may have extensive opportunities of studying the practice of medicine and surgery; you may have time to study with care the literature of your profession; but it is very improbable that many of you will have the leisure or even



the opportunity of acquiring that knowledge of anatomy which is only to be gained in the dissecting-room.

The great basis on which you may safely rest, the secure foundation on which you may build, the touchstone which will discover truth and evolve error, the loadstar of all future discovery in medicine or surgery by which you may safely and fearlessly steer your bark among the billows of surging error to the haven of your life's voyage, is Anatomy as known and vitalised by Physiology.

If you have such a knowledge of anatomy, it will mingle so insensibly in every mental act which guides your examination of a patient, or directs your operative interference with his frame, that your very finger-points will seem to know their anatomy; your knife will seem to guide its point and edge with so prescient a knowledge of the resistance of the tissues and the relation of parts, here working cautiously with deftest touches, there again with boldest sweeps, that all the hesitation of doubt, all the recklessness of ignorance, all careless expression of boldness, will equally be removed from your manner and your art. You will become daily more confident in yourselves, and thus capable of inspiring confidence in those who confide their patients or themselves to your professional care.

Your Hospital practice and Dispensary work constitute the other grand departments of professional study on which I should desiderate a greater bestowal of time and attention.

In former times when a preliminary apprenticeship to some busy practitioner was enforced by regulation of the colleges, a shorter period of hospital attendance might perhaps suffice. But now when apprenticeships are abolished, at least on this side of the Tweed, it becomes all the more necessary that every practical development of study at the bedside should be most diligently cultivated.

In the arrangement of your studies recommended by the Colleges of Surgeons and Physicians, your hospital attendance is supposed to commence in your second year. I see no reason why you should delay so long. I see no good reason why you should not commence your hospital studies the very first day you register yourself as a medical student. There are no unanswerable arguments I am acquainted with against this arrangement. The hospital hour is not occupied by any class. Familiarity with disease, which is to be your life-long work and occupation, can scarcely make you think little of it, or make you less kindhearted in dealing with suffering humanity. The hospital visit is not more likely to excite prurient thoughts in the first year of study than in the second, and the display of disease and death can hardly produce such emotions, except in a mind in which these thoughts are already harboured and encouraged. To observe the effects of disease and injury can scarcely diminish from the interest felt and the attention bestowed upon the more preliminary subjects, all of which are intended to culminate in the cure of disease and alleviation of suffering.



I would again remind those who would defer attendance upon hospital practice till a later period of study than their first year, that medicine is an art, and while certain sciences minister to its accuracy, and rescue it from mere empiricism,—as an art it must be learned. The eye, the hand, all the senses must be trained for its due cultivation. Just as a mechanic in any trade seeks to gain as early as he can the technicalities of his handicraft, so should you make use of every opportunity to gain a knowledge, not only of the mere manipulative requirements essential to the practice of medicine as well as surgery as studied at the present day, but of how to deal with patients, so as to obtain that mental control of them, without which all your skill and professional knowledge must be nearly worthless.

It has often seemed to me a thing passing strange, while in the humblest trade an apprenticeship of from five to seven years is required before a man is presumed to be fit to make a coat or tinker a kettle on his own account, that four years of study are supposed to perfect a young gentleman in the art of cobbling the stomachs, skins, and bones of his fellow-creatures. Four years, too, spent not in such stitching or cutting, such physicking or potioning, but rather in listening to musty doctrines handed down to the present day more or less directly from the times of Hippocrates. Four years spent in hearing the same pathological processes described by possibly every one of your teachers, and by each one in a totally different fashion. Four years spent in hearing, perhaps, from one that blood-letting is a panacea, from another that it is nothing short of manslaughter; by one that food and drink is the only true physic of their restorative system, and by another that starvation is the omnipotent heal-all suited alike to overfed dowagers and their pug-dogs; by one that the deligation of arteries makes a wound a dunghill, by another that needles and wires are the source of every possible evil that surgical flesh is heir to.

It seems to me, Gentlemen, that you have fallen on strange times for the study of your profession; one in which the old and treasured traditions of the past are fast melting away like scattered snow-flakes in early summer; one in which the once time-honoured landmarks of the profession are fast disappearing. And while all this whirlwind of conflicting opinion sweeps the face of medical science, the period of reconstruction out of the shattered ruins of the past is only commencing. The materials lie strewn about in vast abundance; there are plenty of young and vigorous builders, but the master mind who shall bring order out of confusion, and re-establish any substantial and permanent system is still awanting. There is but one kind of knowledge which alone stands the shattering blast of passing opinion, and that is personal, individual experience. To obtain your own due share of that experience must therefore be your grand aim, and where but in hospital



or dispensary practice can you hope to secure it during your studentage.

The direction in which science seems to open a way in the further progress of the medical art, is to prevent, rather than to cure disease, and to recognise the influence which unaided nature exerts in the cure of disease and injury. This potency of nature encouraged by gentle means, by careful nursing, by appropriate dieting, by a knowledge of the *juvantia* and of the *ledentia* of the sick and injured, and as little as possible of the wholesale amputations and the half-poisonous administration of drugs which found favour in the times of our forefathers will manifestly constitute the scientific medicine and surgery of the future. The remedial agencies which in our days and in those of our children will alone flourish, must be supplementary to nature and not antagonistic to her efforts. Our highest aim must therefore consist in directing and sustaining the powers of nutrition and repair, which, as a *vis insita*, lurks in each particle of the living frame. To watch these powers to see how they may be modified most safely, how most disastrously, must in great measure constitute your chiefest duty in visiting the sick and hurt. Your object will not be served in studying at the bedside, if you are contented to acquire a knowledge of how to perform operations, how to prescribe drugs, or to modify aliments, but as well when to employ and when to withhold such measures. And in learning this, it will not suffice *jurare verba magistri*, if you hope to make any progress in the race for truth, but to learn by the observation of nature on the one hand, and by noting the effects of the procedures of art upon the other.

You will never gain this knowledge by idling in the passages of an hospital, or by crowding the wards of some favourite teacher, still less will you attain it by thronging the operating theatre in curious crowd, when some unusual case is to be exhibited, or some thrice bloody operation is to be performed.

The knowledge which is really valuable, which will make you good practitioners, and not the mere admirers of other men, is only to be acquired by steady observation, day after day at the bedside, where your own eyes, and your own ears, and no mere *dictum* of any teacher, however famous, assures you of the real progress of the patient. I do not wish you to neglect any means of study, and it is certainly as far as can be from my present intention to lead you to regard operations as the *opprobria* of surgery, as they have been called. Attend operations by all means; but, in seeing them, abstract as far as you can your attention from what is merely sensational, emotional, or spirit-stirring, and test your powers of observation by means of them, calmly considering, in the quietude of your own thoughts, each step, each act from the beginning to the conclusion of the performance. Unless you could do the same thing, unless you appreciate every element in the operative proce-



ture, and have a knowledge of the reason for which it was introduced, you have spent your time in vain. You have in all probability, by your presence on that occasion, only encouraged the bad habit of looking without observation, and of seeing without the exercise of the mental process whereby you are cognizant of what has taken place in your presence.

The result of this vitiated or sensational method of hospital study is apparent at examinations when students frequently come up ignorant of the employment of the simplest appliances; incapable of amputating a finger or a toe; while they can discourse learnedly upon the twenty different methods of amputating at the shoulder-joint, or write a dissertation upon the various procedures in times past and present by which a stone may be removed from the bladder. They are, as a rule, far more ignorant of those matters of practice they are likely any day to meet with than of those with which they may never once be brought in contact during a long lifetime of practical experience.

I do not wish you to be inattentive to what are commonly called the greater matters of your professional study; all I beg of you is not to neglect the more homely examples of medical and surgical practice. In early professional life, if trusted at all, it will probably be in the lesser and not in the greater cases of medical and surgical diseases or injury. Do not, I entreat of you, when that trivial occasion arrives for showing yourselves competent practitioners, have the pain of finding yourselves incapable of doing what some one of *far* less skill and knowledge at once rectifies. Your object, as a young practitioner, will some day be to get over the stream of public want of confidence, which cuts you off as young men from the golden harvest which waves invitingly upon the other side. Most men pass quietly and unobtrusively across the stream by the ordinary stepping stones, and as they wait their turn among the jostling crowd of others anxious like themselves to take the first step, they make sure of their footing when the chance comes, and with greater or less rapidity and agility reach the other bank, passing from one stone to another. Be sure then, Gentlemen, that your education in medicine and surgery fits you to step out boldly and steadily in opinion and treatment when the first case is committed to your care, and let your patron or your patient see he has got the right man as a protégé or a practitioner when he comes to you with something in the scale of surgical sensationalism, as trifling as an ulcerated leg or a simple conjunctivitis.

In prosecuting your hospital studies you should take notes of the cases. In attending upon lectures I have said nothing as to note-taking, because it is advantageous or the contrary according to the idiosyncrasy of each individual. But in attending cases you should undoubtedly take careful and accurate notes, however short. This practice you will find not only advantageous as an exercise in teaching you to observe symptoms and to detail them in a consecu-



tive narrative, but also invaluable by indelibly impressing upon your memory the features and characters of these early observed cases, so as to constitute in after life excellent standards of reference. To them at some future period you may betake yourselves, much in the same way that an artist will place before his eye some bit of harmonious grouping, or felicitous colouring which he had copied from a great master when as a pupil he studied in the galleries.

There is still one other matter to which I must allude before I conclude this already too lengthy address, and that is, the necessity for sedulous attention to Dispensary practice. In the various dispensaries with which our city is fully supplied, the senior student is permitted to engage personally in the cure and treatment of the sick poor. He is thus early permitted to come in contact with the realities of disease, in a different sphere of life perhaps, but presenting much the same phase as he will eventually experience in actual practice.

He will then, if not before, discover what practice really is when stripped of the artificial circumstances of hospital residence. Here the study of disease, and of his fellow-man, when in his own humble dwelling laid low on the bed of sickness and death, will form a wholesome contrast in its sad and painful realities with what he had been accustomed to regard it when seen through the medium of clinical instruction. Here he will find himself at last combating disease, which for weeks has enfeebled the father of a family, and made a happy honest household destitute of the necessities of life; or standing in the gap 'twixt life and death, when the last enemy threatens to lay his remorseless grasp upon the only stay of a widowed mother, he feels as if, holding in his hands the issues of life, the burden and responsibility of professional duty had fallen too suddenly on his youthful heart, and as, if under the continued strain of such anxieties, he could not long maintain his mental equilibrium.

Such a position of conscious responsibility is surely likely to make a right-feeling man repent any negligence he has committed in his earlier student years, and bring home to every one the necessity of due attention to every department of study which increases his practical usefulness.

But there are scenes still more painfully trying which he must encounter, and from which, if he has any heart at all, he cannot stay away. When it is his part, as it will be yours, to stand by the bedside while life's tide slowly ebbs away, and when in the now fast fleeting hours which alone separate the dying man from an eternity upon which he is about to enter without one ray of heavenly hope, with nothing to cheer the gloom of the dark valley, and with a mind panic-stricken by a fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation, he has to listen to heartrending cries for aid when the damp, cold, clammy hand of the dying man clings fast to yours and refuses to let you go; when his eye seems greedily to



scan your face, and while you read therein nothing but blank despair, would seem to hold you spell-bound with mute entreaties. Can you, then, forsake him in his extremity? will you leave him to all the blackness, and darkness, and tempest of mind and soul in his mortal struggle with the last enemy? or, will you soothe his dying fears with brandy and opiates, setting his only just-awakened conscience to sleep by drugging his brain? or, will you lead his mind away to other matters, and talking of old friends, of scenes of other days, of choice vintages and of cooling drinks, of a home, of friends and country far away, let him sink in the deep waters with a soul unsaved?

Will you not rather, if you have found for yourself the only balm to a stricken conscience, and a sin-guilty life; if you have laid all your own confidence and hope on Him who calls to all alike to come unto Him and be ye saved; if you have indeed learned savingly of Him who is the alone Physician of Souls,—will you not rather sit on through the dark and lonely hours striving to release that sin-stricken man from the bondage in which the arch-enemy would fain hold him, and in the hour of his sorest and direst necessity enable him rejoicingly to say, like the prodigal of old, I will arise and go unto my Father!

Will it not, in that dread moment of separation between the soul and the body, when all human skill to save life is fruitless, be a source of real joy and rejoicing to feel assured that your efforts have been blessed as a means of saving a soul from death, and of letting in the light and glory of heaven upon what in nature is the darkest, the gloomiest, the dreadest hour of human woe. But, perhaps, you think that in this sorest extremity of a fellow-creature, your duty as a medical man is past, and that such spiritual consolations belong to the function of the minister of religion. So, perhaps, they may; but even when they are so, your word in season can never come amiss. Recollect, however, that there are cases where an opportunity is never given to the clergyman to gain an entrance, or when his formal visit seems to freeze up the whole heart. In such an hour, too, a helping hand may not be near. I have known a clergyman refuse to visit a dying sinner whose soul was plunged in deep despair, because he did not believe in death-bed repentances. I have seen another read the service of his church with indecent haste, and hurry away paralyzed by his dread of infection. Are you, in such an hour, when your patient has fallen among spiritual thieves, to pass by on the other side?

The longer you live, and the more conversant you are with sickness and death, the more convinced, I am certain, you will become that your duties as a medical man will be but half performed if your functions cease with your efforts to heal the bodies of your patients, and you can or will do nothing for the sore diseases of soul which will plunge both soul and body into perdition.

I can imagine no more horrible source of self-accusing condem-



nation, crushing your own souls to the very verge of everlasting despair, than the conviction lying on your conscience, when laid upon your own death-bed, that this man and that has been carried away to everlasting ruin because your faintheartedness stopped your mouth while he wrestled with sore crying and tears in his last agony. I do not see how you can put it away from you that his spiritual death lies at your door, or how you can expect in your after-life, or when you are in the grasp of the last enemy, to escape the sore gnawings of a reproaching conscience for opportunities thus neglected.

I would have each one of you, therefore, in this the time of health and strength, to make sure of your own saving interest in the shed blood of a once dead and now risen Saviour. I would have you, as you would die in peace, dedicate yourself and your every work in life to His service; and whether you are medical missionaries in name or not, to be so in reality, living lives as well as speaking words which shall make you living epistles of Christ known and read of all men.

If you would see the loveliness and the beauty of this combination of the healer of the body and the physician of souls,—after the great prototype set before you in the Master himself,—I know no more refreshing spectacle than that which is afforded you in the Medical Missionary Dispensary of this city. There, the Christ-like combination of the two duties of caring for the sick body and ministering to the diseased soul, is clearly and practically set forth. And under the directing energy, and with the self-sacrificing spirit to guide you of one whose life, and health, and strength has been devoted to that work, I know nothing which is both so well calculated to be blessed to yourselves, and to make you in turn a blessing to others.

Remember in every study that to all some talent has been intrusted. To one more, to others less, but to all some; and in all for the great purpose of being employed in your life-service. See, then, that it is so occupied by you, and that in none is it wrapped up in the napkin of self-interest, worldly calculation, or the sordid desire to accumulate wretched pelf.

Be certain of this, that to spend and to be spent in the service of Him whose you are, and whom alone you ought continually to serve, is the highest wisdom and the greatest gain.

Entering on your work now,—His servant indeed,—devoting all your energies, all your affections, all your hopes and aspirations to Him and to His glory, however humble may be your lot and function here, in that day when all the follies and vanities, the names and the fortunes of this world will seem as less than nothing, to you will be addressed the welcome words from his lips, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

EDINBURGH: PRINTED BY OLIVER AND BOYD.